The Beatles are in their hotel bedrooms finishing their dinners. George feels tired and goes to sleep. John, wearing a T-shirt and an old pair of trousers, wanders down the hallway past the guard, into the room shared by Paul and Ringo. The table filled with the empty dinner dishes is at the foot of Ringo's bed. Ringo, dressed in pyjamas, is sitting up in bed. Paul, also in pyjamas, is talking about a film, *The Trial*, which he has just seen in London. He is describing a scene in which there is a misunderstanding about a word, when the telephone rings.

'Hello, helloho,' says Paul in a falsetto and then, realizing it is a friend, says Hello seriously. The radio on the bedside night table is playing 'Our Love Is Here to Stay'. Paul asks what days they have off the following week. Ringo starts to tell him, and John tries to confuse them by mentioning other days. The radio plays 'Old Devil Moon'. Paul continues to talk on the phone. 'That was "That Old Devil Moon" in a magnificent interpretation by the MacGuire Sisters,' says the radio. 'Now straight from the moon to the stars.' The radio plays 'Swinging on a Star'.

They start talking about their forthcoming appearance in America and decide they will not be successful. 'After all', says John,' Cliff went there and he died. He was fourteenth on a bill with Frankie Avalon, and George said that *Summer Holiday* was second feature at a drive-in in St Louis.'

The radio played 'You'll Always Be Mine', and Paul returned from the telephone to announce 'We've been invited to a masque, what's that?' John tells him it means a masked ball. 'It sounds like a rave,' says Paul and returns to the phone.

'Wonderful singing by Mark Wynter,' says the radio. 'Only you would say that,' says Paul. 'Sure Trader Vic's is great . . . first the friends come, then the relatives of the friends . . . I mean the friends are bad enough.'

Paul finishes his telephone conversation and resumes talking about films. 'What I liked best in *The Trial'*, he says, 'was when they walked quietly through the concentration camp. It was so dead quiet, just like another world and Elsa Martinelli in the background just necking like mad.'

'Now the Shadows sing to you', said the radio and I asked Paul whether he had seen *8½* 'Oh, Peter told me to see that,' he said. 'But I don't know. I have this friend and every time he tells me to see something it turns out to be a drag for an evening's entertainment. He told me to go see *Next Time*

I'll Sing to You and it was a dead bore. Then he suggested *A Severed Head* – it was the crappiest thing I'd seen for years. It's all this bit outside, "Well worth crossing the Atlantic for." Eccch, you can have it – crap.'

He turned to John. 'Stupid things like getting up in bed – no clothes on – fucking soft – they could have just had her herself without him getting into bed. I was getting bored and I spent most of the time watching this woman putting this scarf on and off and thinking that's not with it, tying it that way.'

He starts to joke with John and Ringo over just what is the right way to tie a scarf. After this he says, 'When I see an ordinary film – you know, one made without tricks – I know it sounds crap calling them tricks, but anyway, you get the idea . . . and then it cuts into a whole new action. When you're used to that it's hard to get used to the new kind like *The Trial* and *8½* I suppose. It sort of foxes me. I'm used to when they cut it's always a new thing happening.'

During the discussion about *A Severed Head* Ringo has turned the radio off. Now he turns it back on. 'Du-ah-du-ah. . . .'

'Uh, I need another drink, baby,' says John.

Paul goes to the phone. 'Hello? Yeah, send us six single Scotches – No, make it doubles, yeah, doubles.'

'Du-ah-du-ah . . . And now a number from Xavier Cugat,' says the radio.

'Uh, no, thank you,' says John, 'I always thought he was a kind of saint until I saw a photograph of his wife Abbie Lane. You know, St Francis Xavier with the cows.'

'No, he was somebody else,' says Paul. 'Assisi, with the cows or birds or something.'

The radio plays 'I'm in Love'.

John: 'Nothing better than British country and western.'

Paul: 'Ringo likes this.'

Ringo: 'What? I can't hear.'

Paul: 'Ringo has trouble with his ears.' (To Ringo): *'I say you love this song.'*

Ringo: 'I love the words.'

Paul (in heavy Liverpool accent): 'He loves the words. Have they brought your grapes then?'

Ringo: 'No, they didn't bother today.'

Paul: ‘We brought you a couple of eggs.’

Ringo: ‘Put them in here and the nurse will take them and do them for me.’

Paul: ‘Have you got your potty?’

Ringo: It’s in there in the bath-tub. You’ve changed your hair since you last came to see me.’

Paul: ‘Well, keep a fresh mind about all things.’

There is a moment of silence. Then Paul says that people from the Dingle in Liverpool have a basic fear of hospitals and always seem to bring people eggs.

‘You see,’ says John, ‘psychologically they still regard the egg as something precious from the harder years. The egg is a sort of symbol of fertility and wealth.’

John notices that the radio has been turned off and asks who did it. Both Ringo and Paul deny it and John says he saw Ringo do it.

Paul: ‘Tension is mounting.’

John: ‘Tension all shipping.’

Paul: ‘I once knew a fellow on the Dingle who had two dads. He used to call them number one dad and number two dad. Now apparently number one dad wasn’t nice. He used to throw the boy on the fire – which can develop a lot of complexes in a young lad.’

Ringo: ‘I remember my uncle putting the red-hot poker on me, and that’s no lie. He was trying to frighten me.’

Paul: ‘Tell me, Ringo, do all your relatives go around applying red hot pokers to you?’

John: ‘It’s the only way they can identify them.’

Paul: ‘You see, Ringo comes from a depressed area.’

John: ‘Some people call it the slums.’

Ringo: ‘No, the slums are farther.’

The drinks arrive and they begin discussing the derivation of American names like Melvin, Clyde, and Dusty. They say that most of the slang that they have picked up is American Negro slang.

‘Except that we get it late,’ says John. ‘For instance, we say “with it”, which went out in America two years ago. And also, we sing “Yeah, Yeah”, that went out a couple of years ago although it’s still featured by American coloured groups.’

The first night, John and Paul stayed in their suite, listening to records and reading fan mail. George, who had been signed for £100 a day by the *Daily Express* to write of his experiences in Paris, went to a night club in the Place Pigalle. His column was dictated to Derek Taylor, an *Express* reporter given to Italianate suits and talking out of the side of his mouth. The next day in his column George reported:

There are hundreds of marvellous chicks here – neat, very much in control of themselves. (I'm still looking for a Brigitte Bardot – the wild reckless type.)

If you look at a French girl she looks straight back and smiles. It simply means 'Thank you'.

Otherwise a smart French girl is very much like a smart girl the world over.

I think girls are here to stay.

All of the Beatles, apparently, shared a desire to meet Mlle Bardot. The following morning a large box of candy arrived in their suite. Accompanying it was the card of the director of their French record company. 'Unfortunately,' it read, 'Brigitte Bardot is detained in Brazil. Let's hope that these sweets will make up for her.'

The fog had lifted, and Ringo was on his way to Paris, stopping just long enough at London Airport to change planes and enable British European Airlines to pose him next to the 'BEA' of one of their planes, holding a sign reading 'TLES'. The cartoonists were also making the most of the occasion. Osbert Lancaster in the *Daily Express* showed a statue of Napoleon with a Beatle haircut and Illingworth in the *Daily Mail* had four Beatle-banged De Gaulles, strumming guitars, and singing to Sir Alec Douglas-Home, *à propos* Chancellor Erhard, 'She loves me, *oui, oui, oui'*. The cartoon was labelled 'The Paris Sound'.

Back in the City of Light, John and Paul slept till three o'clock in the afternoon. That much everybody is agreed on. From then on the stories differ. According to George in the *Daily Express*:

We stopped the traffic on the Champs-Élysées today, or rather hordes of girls did, clamouring for autographs.

John, Paul, and I had gone for a mid-afternoon stroll in the gentle sunshine when we were spotted.

Beautiful girls ran from gown shops waving paper and pens. French cabbies cursed and waved their fists as we were engulfed.

Next we tried to sit at a kerb-side café for a drink, but it was impossible.

We ran for a taxi, a crowd followed, and a new traffic jam started.

The gendarmerie *dragged people off the bonnet of the taxi and we escaped to our hotel.*

Is Beatlemania starting off here? There are signs.

However, Vincent Mulchrone, the award-winning veteran reporter for the *Daily Mail*, wrote:

If Paris and the Beatles are going to have an affair, it is getting off to a slow start. You can't blame Paris. She was warm and inviting this morning. The Beatles were warm, but only because they were asleep, and stayed that way until three o'clock in the afternoon.

Admittedly, George Harrison was astir early, but John Lennon and Paul McCartney slumbered on until frantic photographers forced them at lens point into the Champs-Élysées.

The decision to let them venture thus far (all of 500 yards) was taken at the highest level by the Beatle top brass, men who tend to reminisce over battles at English stage doors and talk gravely of 'security problems'.

They needn't have worried. Either the Champs-Élysées was not in mobbing mood today, or Beatlemania is still, like Britain's entry into the Common Market, a problem the French prefer to put off for a while.

Exactly three girls asked them for autographs. One was English.

The accuracy of the reports is a moot point. However, figuring prominently in the pictures of the Beatles at a café table in the Champs-Élysées are two reporters for a British women's magazine.

The same night in their suite Epstein is telling them they will have to rehearse the following afternoon for the opening at the Olympia.

'Why?' asks John. 'There's no need to rehearse. We always do the same thing. Besides, the only thing they know here is "She Loves You".'

Ringo asks if they can go out tonight.